

**C.M. RUSSELL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED  
GATORADE MONTANA VOLLEYBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (January 11, 2022) — In its 37<sup>th</sup> year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Tennisen Hiller** of **C.M. Russell High School** is the **2021-22 Gatorade Montana Volleyball Player of the Year**. Hiller is the first Gatorade Montana Volleyball Player of the Year to be chosen from C.M. Russell High School.

The award, which recognizes not only outstanding athletic excellence, but also high standards of academic achievement and exemplary character demonstrated on and off the court, distinguishes Hiller as Montana's best high school volleyball player. Now a finalist for the prestigious Gatorade National Volleyball Player of the Year award to be announced in January, Hiller joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners, including USA Volleyball players Kayla Banwarth (2006-07, Wahlert High School, Iowa), Alisha Glass (2005-06, Leland Public High School, Mich.), Jordan Larson (2004-05, Logan View High School, Neb.) and Foluke Akinradewo (2004-05, St. Thomas High School, Fla.).

The 5-foot-9 senior setter led the Rustlers to a 31-0 record and the Class AA state championship this past season. Hiller amassed 911 assists to go with 214 digs, 135 kills, 36 service aces and 31 blocks while posting a .584 kill percentage and a .528 hitting percentage. The 2021 Class AA Eastern Division Player of the Year, she is a three-time First Team All-State selection and a four-time All-Conference honoree.

The Great Falls Public Schools History Student of the Year in 2020, Hiller has volunteered locally as a youth leadership mentor and as a youth volleyball coach. "Tennisen was a huge reason CMR was as successful as they were," said Karen Switzer, head coach of Billings Senior High School. "Tennisen was also a scoring setter and was the most efficient attacking setter in the state. Tennisen is not just a good setter, but a great one."

Hiller has maintained a 4.0 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a National Letter of Intent to play volleyball on scholarship at the University of Montana this fall.

The [Gatorade Player of the Year](#) program annually recognizes one winner in the District of Columbia and each of the 50 states that sanction high school football, girls volleyball, boys and girls cross country, boys and girls basketball, boys and girls soccer, baseball, softball, and boys and girls track & field, and awards one National Player of the Year in each sport. The selection process is administered by the Gatorade Player of the Year Selection Committee, which leverages experts including coaches, scouts, media and others as sources to help evaluate and determine the state winners in each sport.

Hiller joins recent Gatorade Montana Volleyball Players of the Year Audrey Hofer (2020-21 & 2018-19, Capital High School), Paige Bartsch (2019-20, Capital High School), and Raegan Steiner (2017-18, Billings Senior High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Gatorade has a long-standing history of serving athlete communities and understands how sports instill valuable lifelong skills on and off the field. Through Gatorade's "Play it Forward" platform, Hiller has the opportunity to award a \$1,000 grant to a local or national organization of their choosing that helps young athletes realize the benefits of playing sports. Hiller is also eligible to submit a short video explaining why the organization they chose is deserving of one of twelve \$10,000 spotlight grants, which will be announced throughout the year. To date, Gatorade Player of the Year winners' grants have totaled more than \$3.5 million across more than 1,300 organizations.

Since the program's inception in 1985, Gatorade Player of the Year award recipients have won hundreds of professional and college championships, and many have also turned into pillars in their communities, becoming coaches, business owners and educators.

To learn more about the Gatorade Player of the Year program, check out past winners or to nominate student-athletes, visit [playeroftheyear.gatorade.com](http://playeroftheyear.gatorade.com) or follow us on social media on Facebook at [facebook.com/GatoradePOY](https://facebook.com/GatoradePOY), Instagram at [instagram.com/Gatorade](https://instagram.com/Gatorade) and Twitter at [twitter.com/Gatorade](https://twitter.com/Gatorade).